

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 TEL AV 04508 152202Z

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ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W

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FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 7528

S E C R E T TEL AVIV 4508

NODIS CHEROKEE

FOR SECRETARY FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, US IS

SUBJ: RABIN ON HAWK MISSILES TO JORDAN

1. I MADE MY COURTESY CALL ON PRIME MINISTER RABIN TODAY. IN COURSE OF CONVERSATION ABOUT US MIDDLE EAST POLICY, RABIN SEIZED OPPORTUNITY TO LASH OUT AT REPORTED US PLANS TO SELL JORDAN 14 BATTERIES OF HAWK MISSILES MUCH MORE VIGOURESLY THAN HE DID IN BONN. HE SAID GOI HAD BEEN SOLEMNLY ASSURED WEEKS AGO THAT ONLY THREE BATTERIES WERE TO BE SOLD. GOI HAD NOT LIKED THIS DECISION EITHER ON ITS MERITS OR IN THE WAY IT WAS REACHED BUT COULD LIVE WITH IT SINCE IT DID NOT CHANGE THE STRATEGIC POSITION OF JORDAN. 14 BATTERIES WAS ANOTHER MATTER AND ASSURED A PSYCHOLOGICAL REACTION IN JORDAN VIRTUALLY GUARANTEED PARTICIPATION IN ANOTHER WAR. THE NEWS OF USG PLANS TO SELL 14 BATTERIES HAS COME AS A BOMBSHELL WHICH COULD HAVE ADVERSE BEARING ON KNESSET CONSIDERATION OF AN INTERIM AGREEMENT.

2. RABIN SAID HE COULDN'T COMPREHEND SUCH A DECISION. US OFFICIALS HAD COMPLAINED THAT GOI HAD " MISLED" US IN NEGOTIATIONS. NOW IT SEEMED ISRAEL HAD BEEN MISLED. KNESSET OPPOSITION, RABIN SAID, WOULD HAVE FIELD DAY CRITICIZING GOVT IN DEBATE (SCHEDULED) FOR JULY 16) ON ADVISABILITY OF ACHIEVING AN INTERIM AGREEMENT, AND HE WOULD HAVE DIFFICULT TIME DEMONSTRATING US WORD COULD BE TRUSTED.

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3. COMMENT: RABIN WAS VERY ANGRY ABOUT US ACTION ON
HAWK SALES AND WANTED ME TO KNOW IT. HE CLEARLY BELIEVES THAT
OPPOSITION HAS BEEN GIVEN A BLUDGEON TO HAMMER HIM ON INTERIM
AGREEMENT. IF RABIN IS LOOKING FOR AN EXCUSE TO BACK AWAY
FROM AN INTERIM SETTLEMENT ABOUT WHICH YOU KNOW HE HASHAD
DOUBTS, HE MAY BELIEVE ONE HAS BEEN PROVIDED. IT WOULD
BE HELPFUL TO ME LOCALLY IF YOU COULD LET ME KNOW
SOONEST HOW YOU INTEND TO HANDLE THIS PROBLEM, IF ONLY
COSMETICALLY.
TOON

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